

Robert Nelson's Testimony to the Montgomery County Council at the Public Hearing on the FY23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 CIP February 8, 2022

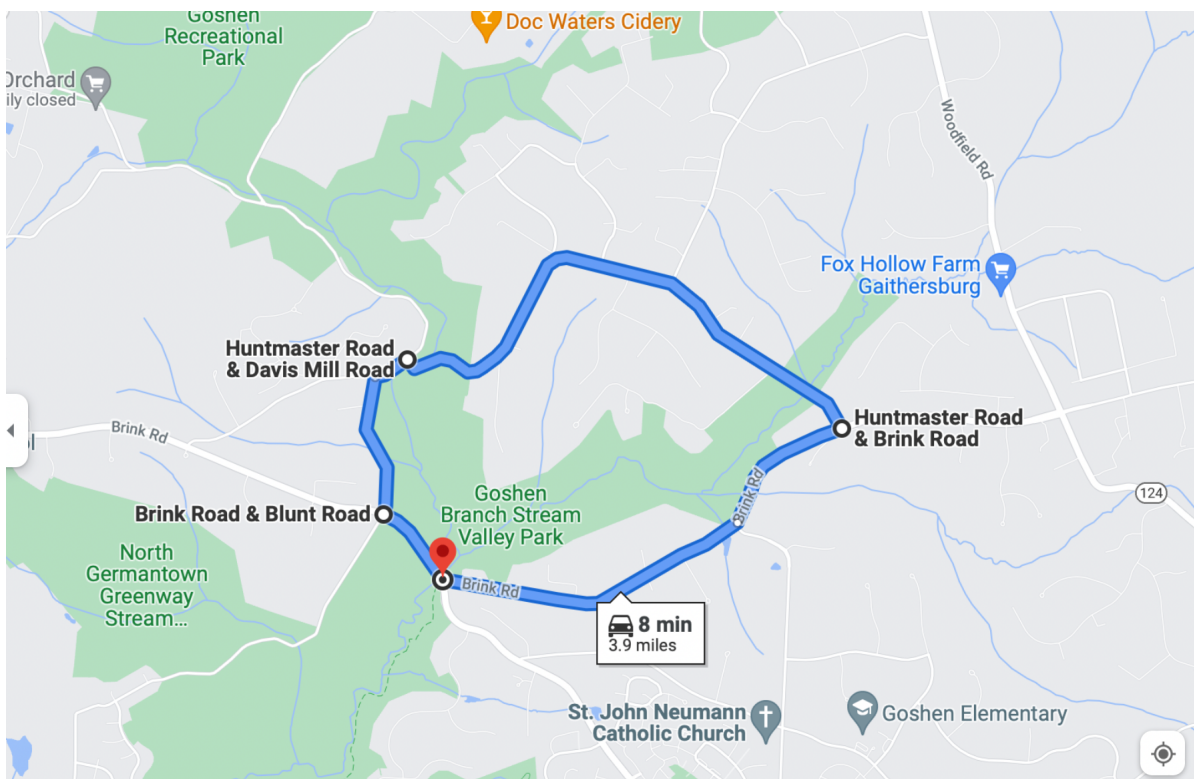
I'm Robert Nelson, resident of Goshen and former Chair of the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board. With interest rates at record lows and infrastructure funding available from the Biden administration, let's complete Capital Improvement Projects that have been promised for years and even decades.

Twelve days ago a bridge in Pittsburgh tragically collapsed sending a bus and several other vehicles into the ravine below. The bridge was constructed in 1970 and was rated in poor condition. We have a bridge on Brink Road in Goshen that was constructed in 1972 and is also rated in poor condition. Here is an actual quote: "The 2018 bridge inspection report for Bridge No. M-0064 indicates that the bridge steel beams are in poor condition with areas of 100 percent section loss." The federal government would provide up to 80% of the replacement cost, yet the proposed CIP budget (P502104 Brink Road Bridge M-0064) would risk residents' safety for several more years by not replacing this bridge until 2026. If we lost this bridge, we would suffer a five-mile detour over rustic roads not designed to accommodate the current traffic on Brink Road.

We need another bridge over Great Seneca Creek and there is one planned with the completion of the 5.6-mile gap in the Mid-County Highway. Building M-83 costs less than the BRT budget and gives Clarksburg residents the fastest route to the Shady Grove Metro station via either bus or personal vehicle. Building BRT linking Montgomery College campuses fails to address the pressing transportation needs of the Upcounty. Currently there is \$168M planned in the CIP for road construction (P501107 Goshen Road South) and for an additional \$182M we could complete the higher priority Mid-County Highway on the Master Planned Route. For many years the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board has consistently recommended that M-83 be included in the CIP. Please act now to restore CIP funding for the Mid-County Highway.

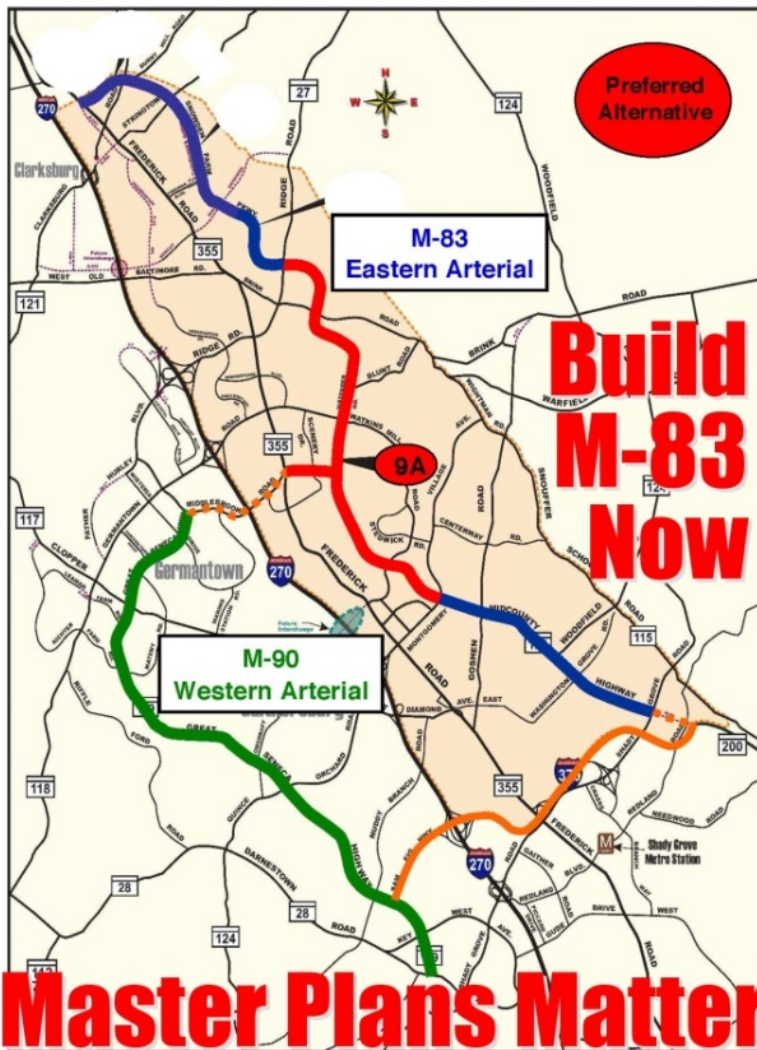


A 1970 bridge in poor condition collapsed in Pittsburgh on January 28, 2022. The Brink Road bridge crossing Great Seneca Creek was built in 1972 and is in poor condition.



The potential loss of the Brink Road bridge over Great Seneca Creek could result in a five-mile detour over narrow rustic roads not designed to accommodate the current traffic on Brink Road.

Build M-83 now on the Master Plan Route!



Completed Sections of Eastern Arterial – Snowden Farm Parkway and Midcounty Highway
Preferred Alternative to complete Eastern Arterial – Alternative 9A, Master Plan Route
Western Arterial – Great Seneca Highway
Connections; East to West, and both highways to the ICC. Solid-completed, Dashed- planned

Recognizing that transportation is the #1 concern of Montgomery County residents, the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board and Upcounty residents have been clamoring for the county to invest in north/south corridor transportation improvements. Four to six additional travel lanes could be made available if the Snowden Farm Parkway in Clarksburg were connected to the Mid-County Highway in Gaithersburg. A bus on the completed highway would have a travel time of less than half of the CCT. Current construction cost estimates for building the 5.6-mile gap are about \$350M.

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